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DESEGREGATION OR INTEGRATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS, THE POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH.

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RECENT FEDERAL REPORTS ON NEGRO ACHIEVEMENT IN BIRACIAL SCHOOLS SUGGEST THAT ON THE AVERAGE NEGROES AND WHITES ACHIEVE BEST IN WHITE-MAJORITY SCHOOLS, AND THAT THE RACIAL CONTACT IS AN IMPORTANT VARIABLE IN THIS EFFECT. PSYCHOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN BIRACIAL LEARNING SETTINGS POINTS TO THREE FACTORS WHICH MAY HAVE A DETRIMENTAL EFFECT ON NEGRO STUDENTS. CHILDREN IN NEWLY INTEGRATED CLASSROOMS MAY EXPERIENCE A SOCIAL THREAT, A LOW EXPECTANCY OF SUCCESS, AND A FAILURE THREAT WHICH HAS A "SOCIALLY PUNITIVE MEANING." THESE ADVERSE EFFECTS COULD BE MINIMIZED BY THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE EXPOSURE TO DESEGREGATED SCHOOLS. MOREOVER, A SERIES OF EXPERIMENTS WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS SHOWS THAT IN SITUATIONS OF SOCIAL ACCEPTANCE NEGROES WANT TO MEET THE HIGH ACADEMIC STANDARDS OF WHITE PEERS. THESE STANDARDS OFFER THE NEGROES AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SELF-EVALUATION AND HAVE HIGH INCENTIVE VALUE. NEGRO LOW ACHIEVERS ALSO BENEFIT FROM DESEGREGATION BECAUSE LOW SELF-ESTEEM MAY BE IMPROVED WHEN A CHILD FINDS HIS ENVIRONMENT RESPONSIVE TO HIS ACHIEVEMENT EFFORTS. RESEARCH HAS ALSO SHOWN THAT A TEACHER'S BEHAVIOR AFFECTS A NEGRO CHILD MORE THAN A WHITE CHILD. IF THE NEGRO FEELS REJECTED, HE BECOMES ANXIOUS AND ACHIEVES LESS, AND THUS HIS SCHOOL PROGRESS SLOWS. ABILITY GROUPING MAY ALSO BE DETRIMENTAL TO NEGRO PUPILS. UNTIL THERE IS FULL SCHOOL INTEGRATION, STANDARDS IN NEGRO SCHOOLS MUST BE RAISED AND NEGRO PARENTS ENCOURAGED TO FOSTER POSITIVE ATTITUDES TOWARD EDUCATION. IN NEWLY INTEGRATED SCHOOLS TEACHERS SHOULD BE TRAINED TO UNDERSTAND THE EMOTIONAL NEEDS OF THEIR STUDENTS. THIS PAPER WAS PREPARED FOR THE NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY IN AMERICA'S CITIES, SPONSORED BY THE U.S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS, WASHINGTON, D.C., NOVEMBER 16-18, 1967. (NH)

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DESEGREGATION OR INTEGRATION IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS? THE POLICY IMPLICATIONS OF RESEARCH

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The dominant fact that emerges from the recent research endeavors of the U.S. Office of Education and the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, is that educational opportunity is greater in racially balanced than in racially isolated schools. These historic studies show beyond any reasonable doubt that the academic attainments of both white and Negro pupils are significantly higher in majority-white classrooms than in majority-Negro classrooms.

There is continuing debate over what causal factors underlie this unequivocal finding.* Much of the discussion arises from the inability of the two federal documents (reports of large-scale survey data), to provide detailed information about the psychological processes

* Some writers even have maintained that racial composition of enrollments <u>per se</u> is not an important determinant of the obtained school differences in pupils' achievement.

that mediate superior learning in racially balanced environments. Such information can best be obtained from relatively small and intensive studies of children's reactions, in carefully controlled achievement situations.

The purpose of this paper is to bring relevant knowledge from such psychological research to bear on the issue of desegregation and its scholastic effects. It will be seen that racially balanced classrooms can generate both favorable and detrimental influences on the performance of minority-group students: the conditions promoting one or the other define the difference between mere physical desegregation and true racial integration.

THE COLEMAN AND COMMISSION REPORTS

I will begin by reviewing briefly the findings of the two Federal reports on the scholastic effects of racial balance and isolation. The survey of the U. S. Office of Education, executed by James Coleman and others in 1965, involved administration of questionnaires and objective tests to a fairly representative sample of about 650,000 pupils in over 4,000 public elementary and high schools throughout the Nation.[1] All teachers, principals, and district superintendents in these schools also participated. The report indicates that the achievement of both Negro and white pupils, when their family background characteristics are controlled statistically, is more closely related to the social class backgrounds of their classmates than to all objective school characteristics together (curriculum, expenditure per

pupil, physical facilities, size of classes, and so on) and to all teacher characteristics together (type of education, experience verbal ability, attitudes, and the like). In the upper grades the apparent influence of student body characteristics on individual achievement was two to three times greater for Negro pupils than for white pupils.

Given the close relationship between socio-economic status and race it is not surprising that as the proportion white in a school increased, Negro achievement rose, and that the effect was cumulative. The seeming impact of desegregation can be illustrated by comparing scores on reading comprehension for Negro high school students in the metropolitan North who never had a white classmate with scores of metropolitan northern Negroes with similar family backgrounds who attended racially mixed schools from the early grades. When figures from Table 3.3.2 of the Coleman report are consolidated, it is revealed that Negro ninth graders in predominantly white classes whose first interracial experience occurred in the primary grades had an average score of 48.2. This is about five points below the white norm for the same region, but less than two points below the national norm of 50. In contrast, Negro ninth-graders who had never had white classmates averaged 43.8--almost 10 points below the white regional norm. Thus it seems as though desegregation reduced the racial achievement gap by almost half. The results based on Negro twelfth-graders are similar to the foregoing findings for ninth-graders. In addition, the

data reveal considerably more variability in the test scores of Negroes in majority-white classrooms than of Negro children in classrooms with a smaller proportion of whites.

Due to the time pressures under which it was prepared, the Coleman report devoted relatively little attention to the effects of desegregation. Therefore, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights undertook to analyze more thoroughly portions of the Coleman data bearing upon this question, and to carry out new investigations as well.[2] The Commission was particularly interested in establishing whether the apparently favorable effects of desegregation on Negro scholastic achievement could be attributed at least in part to racial composition per se. Hence the following factors were controlled by means of cross-tabulations: (a) quality of educational services available; (b) academic ability and social-class background of classmates; and (c) academic ability and home backgrounds of the Negro students. Even with the influence of these three sets of factors neutralized to a large extent, the Commission found a consistent relationship between racial composition of the classroom and Negro test scores. The apparent benefits of desegregation were not linear; that is, Negroes in predominantly white classrooms scored higher on the average, but those in classrooms where Negroes constituted a majority did no better than pupils in all-Negro situations. As in the Coleman report, the beneficial effect of desegregated experiences appeared to be greatest for

Negro children whose biracial contacts began in the early grades.

As regards white children, the achievement test scores of those in classes with some, but less than a majority of, Negroes, were just as high as the scores of children in all-white classes.

To sum up, the Federal data strongly suggest that (a) on average, children of both races, of all levels of ability, and from high and low social-class backgrounds learn best in schools with majority-white enrollments; and (b) racial contact in and of itself contributes importantly to the effect. Those who prepared the Civil Rights Commission's report were fully aware of the ideological implications of these findings. Elsewhere, Thomas Pettigrew, Chief Consultant of the Commission's study, has pointed out that Negroes can rightfully reject the implication that "white is right," that predominantly Negro schools cannot be "good schools."[3] Pettigrew referred to a statement by Commissioner Frankie Freeman of the Civil Rights Commission in which she addressed herself specifically to this issue:

> The question is not whether in theory or in the abstract Negro schools can be as good as white schools. In a society free from prejudice in which Negroes were full and equal participants, the answer would clearly be "Yes." But we are forced, rather, to ask the harder question, whether in our present society, where Negroes are a minority which has been discriminated against, Negro children can prepare themselves to participate effectively in society if they grow up and go to school in isolation from the majority group. We must also ask whether we can cure the disease of prejudice and prepare all children for life in a multiracial world if white children grow up and go to school in isolation from Negroes.

Why does satisfactory progress in school on the part of Negro children demand day-to-day contact with majority-group peers and adults? To answer the question, one must analyze the psychological dynamics of racially mixed and isolated learning environments. While the Coleman and Commission reports suggest that the conditions generally prevailing in northern desegregated classrooms are, on balance, favorable to Negro performance, it is important to recognize that these biracial situations can possess academically detrimental features as well. As mentioned earlier, the Coleman survey revealed considerably more variability of performance among Negroes in classrooms where Negro pupils were a majority. In its reanalysis of these Coleman data the Civil Rights Commission was able to relate between-school differences in Negro achievement and attitudes to the quality of interracial contacts, as measured by teachers' reports of interracial tension. In desegregated schools where most teachers reported no tension, Negro students were more proficient, college-oriented, and optimistic about being rewarded for their efforts.

PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF BIRACIAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS

In order to clarify the behavioral effects of various types of biracial achievement situations I and some colleagues embarked several years ago on a program of experimental research that is still in progress.[5] Though most of the research has been done on college

students, the main findings have implications for younger age groups as well.

Our first discovery was that biracial situations can have notably detrimental effects upon the intellectual performance of Negro youths. In two early studies conducted at a northern urban university, various mental and physical tasks were assigned to male groups composed of two Negro students and two white students, all of whom initially were total strangers. In general, Negroes displayed marked social inhibition and subordination to white partners. When teams were engaged in cooperative problem solving, Negro subjects made fewer proposals than did whites, and tended to accept the latter's contributions uncritically. On all tasks combined, Negroes made fewer remarks than did whites, and spoke more to whites, proportionately, than to one another. White men, on the other hand, spoke more to one another, proportionately, than to the Negroes. These behaviors occurred even when group members could expect a monetary bonus for good teamwork, and were informed that their abilities were higher than those of subjects in other groups.

In the second experiment we made special efforts to increase the self-confidence of Negro subjects. Negro and white team mates were matched on intelligence by means of individual pretesting, and were then told that they were matched. In addition, they were made to display apparently equal ability on certain mental tasks that were

administered in the group situation, through secret experimental manipulation of the tasks. Despite these procedures the Negro subjects later revealed feelings of inferiority and anxiety. On a post-experimental questionnaire they ranked the whites higher on ability on the very tasks that had been rigged, and expressed relatively low satisfaction with the group experience.

That this type of face-to-face biracial situation produced genuine impairment of intellectual functioning in the Negro students, rather than just an inhibition of outward behavior, is apparent from another study that was conducted at the same northern college. Racially mixed pairs of subjects were given a series of mental problems to solve cooperatively. But before discussing each problem the men had to record privately their individual solutions. Negroes made more errors than they had made on the same problems at a prior, individual testing session. White subjects, on the other hand, made fewer private errors than they had made previously.

Similarly, in a study conducted in the South, individual Negro students from a predominantly Negro college were told that they would receive a painful stimulus (electric shock) while working on a digit-symbol task. The performance of those who worked in the presence of a white peer and a white tester was more adversely affected by the shock instructions than was the performance of subjects in a Negro peer-Negro tester situation. Thus, we see that feelings of insecurity at being alone in a strange white environment made the Negro highly vulnerable to additional stress.

These experiments suggest three factors that may detrimentally affect Negro students in face-to-face confrontations with whites. First, it can be assumed that novel types of contact with white strangers possess a social threat component for members of a subordinated minority group. Negroes may be fearful of arousing white hostility by being assertive or displaying intellectual competence. The degree of social threat should be a direct function of (a) the amount of evidence of white hostility (or the extent to which evidence of white friendliness is lacking) and (b) the amount of power possessed by whites in the contact situation, as shown by their numerical predominance, control of authority positions, and so on. Note that in all of the experiments described, except the one that used electric shock instructions, white subjects tended to ignore their Negro partners, the institutional setting was a predominantly white college, and the experimenters were white faculty members.

It seems likely that Negro children would be under some degree of social threat in a newly integrated classroom. Cold indifference on the part of white peers could frustrate their needs for companionship and approval, resulting in lowered self-esteem and a desire to escape from an unpleasant environment. The Negro child would thereby be distracted from the task at hand, to the detriment of performance. An example of how the presence of white adult strangers can seriously disrupt verbal learning in Negro children of grade school age is provided by an experiment we recently carried out in a

Negro section of a large northern city. Negro boys of average age 8 were tested individually by either Negro or white adult males. They were required to learn a list of paired words. Irrespective of actual progress on the task, half of them periodically received approval from the adults and the other half just as often received disapproval. The results were clear-cut: for each type of examiner, approval was more effective than disapproval, but regardless of type of feedback, children learned better with Negro testers than with white testers. The poorest learners were boys with a high need for approval, as measured by a personality test, who experienced disapproval from white testers. In short, the white adults' experessions of approval were relatively ineffectual, while their disapproval was sometimes highly disruptive. Apparently, Negro pupils in northern segregated schools react anxiously to white strangers in authority roles. However, it is entirely possible that a relatively brief period of friendly acquaintance would dispel the Negro child's apprehensions. Our experiment did not explore that possibility. It is also noteworthy that the adults in the experiment were male. When we conducted a similar experiment using female examiners, there were no differences in learning due to the race of the adults. That white males had a detrimental influence, but not white females, can perhaps best be explained in terms of relative strangeness--children whom we tested had had one or more white female teachers but no white male teachers.

Another factor that could detrimentally affect Negro students' performance in biracial situations is low expectancy of success in competition with white standards. Our northern Negro undergraduates may have lacked motivation to engage in the experimental tasks for this reason. The experiments indicate that the Negro's low expectancy of success may result from feelings of inferiority that have no basis in reality, but likely reflect an emotional accommodation to the demeaning role in American society that has been imposed upon his racial group by the dominant white majority. However, because of the lower achievement standards and inferior educational services that often mark the predominantly Negro school, low expectations of success on the part of newly desegregated minority group pupils will often be quite realistic. When the Negro transferee enters a school that has substantially higher standards than he knew previously he may become discouraged and not try to succeed.

As a third type of detrimental influence, the Negro college students in our northern experiments may have anxiously anticipated disapproval, disparagement or rejection by their white partners and the white experimenter as a consequence of poor performance. This factor can be called failure threat. A high expectation of failure at a task does not by itself constitute failure threat--it is necessary also that the failure have a socially punitive meaning. For the elementary and high school pupil, academic failure often entails strong disapproval by parents, as well as by teachers and perhaps classmates.

To diminish the adverse influence of the three factors that have been mentioned--social threat, low expectation of success, and failure threat--the Negro child should begin his desegregated experience as early as possible. Recall that this principle is well supported by the Federal data. There is also objective evidence to suggest that as social threat diminishes in biracial situations--that is, as white acceptance increases--Negro academic attainment benefits. An investigation of southern Negro scholarship winners who attended predominantly white colleges in the North revealed that those who participated in extracurricular activities and had a satisfactory number of friends got better marks than those who did not.[6] Similarly, the Civil Rights Commission found that in predominantly white classrooms, Negro pupils who said they had one or more close white friends tended to have higher achievement scores and college aspirations.

Returning to our experiments with college students, it follows logically from the foregoing analysis that if Negro subjects could be made to perceive intellectual competition with whites as neither socially threatening nor hopelessly difficult their performance would improve markedly. To test this proposition, northern Negro undergraduates were placed in a secretly controlled problem-solving situation. They were given instructions which, in effect, <u>forced them to disagree openly</u> with a white partner while displaying competence equal to that of the partner. As a result of this experience, the Negroes were able to function more effectively and

autonomously when they later worked on another, unrigged task with the same white person. This study demonstrated that in biracial situations, Negro inhibition could be removed quite readily through an appropriate type of training.

More important, in a later phase of our research program we were able to establish that under certain conditions biracial environments actually have a facilitating effect upon Negro intellectual achievement. We discovered that with anxiety-arousing factors minimized by various experimental procedures, Negro youths performed better when anticipating comparison with white peers, or evaluation by white authorities, than they performed in all-Negro settings. While our evidence at present is limited to Negro male college students, there is no reason to doubt that further research can extend the finding to younger age groups.

Four types of experiment have thus far been done. The first type consisted of studies in which the anxiety of Negro subjects was diminished by presenting a task (digit-symbol) with instructions that emphasized its lack of evaluative or competitive significance. Two such experiments were carried out at a private, predominantly Negro college in the Upper South, that is known for its high academic quality. The first used instructions which stated: "This is not a test of any kind. Your scores will not be shown to anyone at your college, and you will not be compared . . . . /with other students/." Subjects worked at the task in two racial settings. One featured a Negro

confederate who posed as a second subject, and a Negro experimenter who introduced himself as a psychologist. In the other condition the confederate and experimenter were both white. The white environment, we found, occasioned higher achievement scores.

The second study was similar to the one just described, except that subjects worked individually with no confederate present. Again digit-symbol scores were higher with a white tester than with a Negro tester.

To account for the social facilitation effect of the white adult, it was assumed that he was perceived by Negro subjects as a more powerful and prestigious figure than the Negro examiner. (Whites, after all are the economic gate-keepers in American society.) Therefore, the prospect of white approval had high positive incentive value, while the prospect of white disapproval had high negative incentive value. Since the task was explicitly defined as non-evaluative subjects were not unduly fearful of doing poorly, and could strive to make a favorable impression on the white authority figure. That Negro students view white experimenters as more powerful evaluators than Negro experimenters was confirmed in a subsequent study at another Negro college, where subjects rated the former as being more "competent" and "important."

In another type of experiment, such tasks as digit-symbol, arithmetic and scrambled words were presented to students at predominantly Negro colleges as tests of intelligence. Instructions typically

read: "This test is part of a new scholastic aptitude examination that all students will take. It will be used to evaluate your intellectual ability. Your score will be used in advising you about your academic and professional potentialities. . ." In addition, subjects were informed either that their scores would be compared with norms for students at their own, predominantly Negro college (Negro comparison), or with norms for all college students throughout the state (white comparison). Finally, to allay anxiety the tester was always a Negro.

Five experiments of this type were done, involving four colleges. Two of these were in the Deep South and at the time of testing had relatively low admission standards. Subjects at these colleges achieved higher scores when they expected to be compared with other Negroes. The other three experiments used one of the same Deep South colleges after a new, selective admissions policy had been introduced, as well as two non-selective, state-supported institutions in the Upper South and North. Better performance was obtained in the white comparison condition. In sum, when tested by a Negro, and not placed in face-to-face confrontation with white peers, students in Negro colleges of moderate academic quality were favorably motivated by the challenge of white-norm comparison, while students in Deep South institutions of relatively low quality worked better in competition with Negro norms.

Our interpretation of these results is that, except in the most depressed types of segregated learning environment (Deep South non-selective colleges) the opportunity for biracial comparison is highly

stimulating because it provides more useful information for self-evaluation than does comparison with other Negroes. This is so because, in general, white standards of intellectual ability and achievement are more relevant to future career prospects. Thus biracial peer comparisons are socially facilitating because of their informational value. By using only Negro testers in these experiments the biracial facilitation effect was not offset by subjects' fear of eliciting white disapproval if they failed to meet what was for them a difficult standard.

The outcome of the peer-norm comparison experiments is all the more remarkable when one notes that most of the subjects had never sat in a biracial classroom throughout more than twelve years of schooling. The facilitation effect of cross-racial comparison should, if anything, be even greater for younger Negro pupils, who likely are well aware of the significance of white achievement standards, but who have had less time to fall behind them in segregated schools. This generalization is consistent with what we know about the superior performance of Negro children who entered desegregated classrooms at an early age. Moreover, as Pettigrew points out, Negro pupils in predominantly white schools who have white friends, and therefore are apt to be particularly aware of the importance of white standards, are higher achievers than Negroes in the same schools who do not have white friends.[7]

Consider a third type of experimental demonstration of biracial facilitation of the achievement of Negro college students. Again, simple mental tasks requiring speed and accuracy were used in conjunction with intelligence-test instructions. But now, the race of the tester was varied, while the race of ostensible peer norms was either varied or held constant by means of suitable instructions. To maximize the social effect of the experimenter, the subjects--all freshmen--were told that immediately after completion of the testing the experimenter would see each of them privately, score his work, and explain what the score meant with regard to prospects of future academic and vocational success.

We found, as our theory predicted, that the white examiner occasioned better performance than the Negro examiner when Negro norms (that is, a relatively easy standard) were employed, while the Negro examiner was more favorable for achievement than the white person when white-peer norms (that is, a relatively hard standard) were used. <u>The poorest experimental condition was the combination of Negro tester and Negro norms</u>.

To review the principles upheld by the results, when there was no anxious anticipation of possible face-to-face devaluation by a white authority figure, the riskier but also more informative white-peer standard was preferred by the Negro subjects. On the other hand, when white evaluation <u>was</u> expected, the less informative but also less risky Negro-peer standard was preferred.

It would of course be fallacious to make a literal application of these findings to the desegregated classroom--that is, to conclude that Negro pupils should not have both white teachers and predominantly white classmates at the same time. On the contrary, what our study suggests is that even when performance is endowed with strong evaluative significance both cross-racial comparisons and cross-racial evaluations can improve Negro motivation, provided ego-threatening features of the situation are kept at a minimum. Here emotional supportiveness on the part of teachers would be of critical importance both in its direct significance to Negro children, and in its influence upon the social reactions of their classmates.

Of considerable import are the findings of another experiment of the type just described. It differed from its predecessor in two ways: it was conducted at a Negro college with relatively high standards of admission, and all subjects were told they would be evaluated against white-peer norms. Now, even though only the cross-racial comparison was used, higher test scores were attained with a white examiner than with a Negro examiner. Apparently, for the able Negro students who had been accepted into this college, meeting a white standard of competence did not seem so difficult as to dampen their desire for evaluation by a white authority figure.

Finally, I come to a fourth type of research on the factors that produce optimal achievement in biracial environments. Its special feature is the experimental manipulation of subjects' expectations of

success on an ability test, accomplished by giving them different types of information, ostensibly based upon their scores from a prior administration of the same test. Subjects at a non-selective State college in the Upper South were told that they had either little chance, a moderately good chance, or a very good chance of equaling the norms for their age groups. The most relevant finding has to do with the impact of expectancies under white-norm instructions. In this condition low expectancy of success was highly detrimental to performance, while in a Negro-norms condition the low-probability feedback did not impair motivation. Both groups had sharply higher test scores when expectancy of success was moderately high, and then declined somewhat as it became very high. The results suggest that in cross-racial competition, Negro students may be readily discouraged by unfavorable feedback, but also highly responsive to reasonable chances of success.

To recapitulate, research on minority group youths and children is on the whole consistent with a five-factor model of Negro achievement in biracial educational settings. On the negative side of the ledger are the following:

Social threat--given the prestige and power of the white majority group, rejection of Negro students by white classmates or teachers should tend to elicit emotional responses (fear, anger and humiliation) that are detrimental to intellectual functioning.

Low probability of success--where there is marked discrepancy in the educational standards of Negro and white schools, or where

feelings of inferiority are acquired by Negro children outside the school, minority-group newcomers in integrated classrooms are likely to have a low expectancy of academic success; consequently their achievement motivation should be low.

Failure threat--when academic failure entails disapproval by significant others (parents, teachers, and perhaps also classmates), low expectancy of success should elicit emotional responses that are detrimental to performance.

On the positive side are these factors:

In an atmosphere of social acceptance Negro pupils will desire to meet the high academic standards of white classmates because of their high informational value for self-evaluation, and the high incentive value of favorable evaluation by white adults and peers.

Our experiments indicate that when the strength of negative factors is kept low, biracial environments facilitate high Negro achievement.

DESEGREGATION AND THE LOW-ACHIEVING NEGRO PUPIL

One might too hastily conclude from the evidence presented in the preceding section that desegregation benefits only the more capable Negro. But according to the analysis of the Civil Rights Commission the apparent gain in achievement test scores associated with racially balanced schooling is roughly as large for Negroes of low ability as for those of medium and high ability. Why is it that the low ability children give no indication of being demoralized by the

large achievement gap between themselves and their white classmates? I do not know the answer, but should like to suggest where it may lie. Research recently conducted by myself and associates in an all-Negro elementary school in the North revealed that boys of mediocre ability (and this included most of the boys in the school) tended to be harshly self-critical of their work, even when they were not being observed by teachers. In contrast, the superior students were more readily satisfied by their private efforts. The low-achieving students were also highly anxious about their school work in general, and felt inadequate with their parents. It was as though these overly self-critical, segregated children had accepted a grossly exaggerated conception of their inferiority as Negroes.

The Commission's data on achievement suggest that an opportunity to compare themselves with white peers would have a corrective influence on the self-evaluations of these Negro children, thereby improving their will to learn. The Federal reports provide a little additional information pertinent to this line of reasoning. The Coleman questionnaire included items on self-concept regarding school ability, but it is difficult to interpret the meaning of Negro responses, which were not different from whites' and were not closely related to school achievement. However, another attitude was closely related to school performance. This was the child's belief in the responsiveness of the environment to his achievement efforts (that is, his sense of fate control). Negroes had less sense of fate control than whites. But the Commission's analysis shows that attending

majority-white classes increased the sense of control of Negro children from homes of both high and low educational attainment. The gain occurred whether the desegregated schools had student bodies from homes of similar or dissimilar educational attainment. Since scholastic ability is closely related to the education quality of the home, these data suggest two things: that desegregation increases the Negro child's sense of competence in that he feels more adequately rewarded for his efforts, and that the attitudinal gain is as great for children of low ability as for those of high ability.

THE INFLUENCE OF TEACHERS

For reasons already mentioned, the behavior of teachers in desegregated classrooms is of far greater importance to Negro children than to whites. Anxiety about one's social worth and intellectual adequacy is bound to be more prevalent among the minority newcomers. Hence the research of Seymour Sarason and his associates on school anxiety is particularly relevant for this discussion.[8] From their observations in classrooms, the Sarason group have concluded that teachers vary greatly in the degree to which they provide direction and support to children who approach academic tasks apprehensively. They write:

> In some classrooms failure or lack of progress by a child is responded to by the teacher in a way that increases the child's feeling of inadequacy. In other classrooms such a child is responded to in a way that, while it recognizes the child's failure or rate of progress, does not make him feel that the teacher is rejecting or derogating him, i.e., the teacher likes and accepts him despite his inadequacy or failure. It is too

> frequently forgotten by parents (and also by teachers) how important a figure the teacher is in the life of the child. From the standpoint of the child, what he thinks is the teacher's attitude toward him is of great moment to him, particularly if he likes the teacher and wants to be liked by her...It is when the child is disposed to like and respect the teacher that the ways in which the teacher responds to an adequate performance of the child are of great significance. This would be especially true for the anxious child, who, as described previously by us, is dependent on the positive attitudes of others toward him for a sense of security (p. 272).

Two related points can be made about the Sarason group's emphasis upon the emotional impact on children of the teacher's behavior. First, their own research shows that the relationship between anxiety and scholastic progress is quite substantial. In their most recent study, grouping children on the basis of test anxiety and defensiveness scores revealed mean differences in test performance as large as two years in reading achievement. Controlling for differences in IQ showed that the gap between high-anxious and low-anxious children in average grade assigned by teachers was about as large as differences between children in the highest and lowest of four IQ levels. A second point has to do with the long-term changes that occur in anxiety scores. Hill and Sarason report moderate test-retest correlations over two-year intervals, but little relationship between scores over a four-year interval. Moreover, changes in anxiety scores were associated with changes in academic attainment. It stands to reason the changes are in large measure a reflection of different types of experience in the classroom and in the total school culture.

Also pertinent to the situation of the desegregated Negro child is the ingenious and widely publicized experiment of Rosenthal and Jacobson on the effect of teachers' expectations upon the intellectual growth of their pupils. Elementary school teachers were told at the beginning of the year that certain children were likely, on the basis of fictitious test scores, to "spurt ahead" intellectually during the ensuing year. At the lower grades the randomly designated "intellectual bloomers" showed larger IQ gains at the end of the year than their classmates. The effect was due entirely to the expectation that had been implanted in the minds of the teachers.

Unfortunately, there is reason to suspect that some teachers are inclined to react negatively to minority group pupils. For example, Davidson and Lang found that regardless of their scholastic standing, elementary school pupils from blue-collar homes tended to perceive their teachers as rejectant.[9] In two small-sample studies the race of teachers seemed to make a difference in how they viewed Negro students, with white teachers being more critical of their motivation and ability.[10]

ABILITY GROUPING

It has often been remarked that when ability grouping is practiced, teachers' attitudes and expectations tend to get frozen into rigid patterns that are particularly disadvantageous to minority group children. Yet the placing of pupils at the beginning of each

year in so-called "homogeneous" ability groups is a widely accepted policy throughout America. All too often, the effect is to create racially isolated classes in schools that are nominally desegregated.

The arguments in favor of ability grouping are usually taken for granted. As Joseph Justman observes, "If one were to ask an elementary school supervisor why he uses ability grouping...he would probably cite a number of reasons--pupil achievement is better, teachers find it easier to teach classes showing a narrow range of ability, the slower children do not become a hindrance to those who learn more readily, etc."[11] But Justman notes that when the research in the field is examined, the findings are generally inconclusive. One of the problems has been the ambiguity of the terms "homogeneous" and "heterogeneous." A so-called "heterogeneous" class drawn from a population with a narrow ability range may actually show less variation in ability than a so-called "homogeneous" class drawn from a broad-range population.

Both my comments about the influence of teachers' attitudes and expectations, and my earlier discussion of the benefits of being exposed to white achievement standards, clearly imply that ability grouping as usually practiced cannot be helpful to Negro pupils, and indeed may be detrimental. In this connection, a recent study by Justman in New York City is illuminating. Justman's is perhaps the most comprehensive and adequately executed evaluation yet done on the academic effects of ability grouping. Parallel forms of the Metropolitan Reading Test were administered to third-grade and fourth-grade pupils

in two successive years. Scores for a total of almost 5,000 pupils in 181 classes drawn from 42 schools were available for analysis. The standard deviations of class scores at the initial testing were used to divide them into high, medium, and low homogeneity categories. These categories were then cross-tabulated with the average achievement levels of classes, also divided into three categories of high, medium and low. The results show that on the Word Knowledge and Reading subtests the effects of various degrees of homogeneity were not consistent for different levels of class ability. However, for all ability groups combined, average and low homogeneity groupings were more effective than high homogeneity. Low-homogeneous classes showed the highest mean growth in reading ability.

Justman concludes that ability grouping is of little value unless definite programs, specifically designed for the several ability levels into which classes are grouped, are developed.

CONCLUDING REMARKS: SOME IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL POLICY

The psychological evidence that I have presented is consistent with a definition of racial integration which emphasizes the beneficial effects to Negro pupils of attending racially balanced classes, <u>when an atmosphere of genuine respect and acceptance prevails</u>.

Integration must be seen as the end-goal of all long-range educational planning. Where full integration is not immediately feasible for technical reasons, educational standards of Negro schools should be raised to the level of white schools, so that when minority

group children eventually enter desegregated classes they will have a good chance of succeeding academically. This means, among other things, that the quality of training received by Negro teachers and the criteria used in selecting them for jobs must be raised to white levels, where they are not already at those levels, and racial integration of school faculties must be carried out.

Programs must be instituted for contacting parents and helping them to understand what they can do to prepare children for schooling, and to foster achievement once children are in school.

There should be in-service training of teachers and other personnel in newly desegregated schools to develop awareness of the emotional needs of children in biracial situations. The training should include the imparting of techniques for helping children get acquainted with one another.

The widely accepted practice of assigning children to homogeneous ability groups should either be abandoned entirely or modified to afford maximum opportunity for periodic re-evaluation of potentiality. Ability grouping tends inevitably to freeze teachers' expectations as well as children's own self-images, hence it is particularly dangerous to intellectual development in the early grades.

FOOTNOTES

1. Coleman, J. S., et al. Equality of Educational Opportunity. United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Washington, D. C.: United States Government Printing Office, 1966.

2. Racial Isolation in the Public Schools, a Report of the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights. Washington, D. C.: U. S. Government Printing Office, 1967.

3. Pettigrew, T. F. The Negro and Education: Problems and Prosposals. Paper read at Conference on Research in Race Relations, University of Michigan, April, 1967.

4. U. S. Commission on Civil Rights, op. cit., p. 214.

5. Much of the research is reviewed in the following article by this author: "Review of evidence relating to effects of desegregation on the intellectual performance of Negroes," American Psychologist, Vol. 19, June, 1964, pp. 381-399.

6. National Scholarship Service and Fund for Negro Students. Annual Report 1959-1960. New York: NSSFNS, 1960.

7. Pettigrew, op. cit.

8. Sarason, S. B., Davidson, K. S., Lighthall, F. F., Waite, R. R. and Ruebush, B. K. Anxiety in Elementary School Children. New York: Wiley and Sons, 1960. Hill, K. T. and Sarason, S. B. The relation of test anxiety and defensiveness to test and school performance over the elementary school years: a further longitudinal study. Monogr. Society for Res. Child Develpm., 1966, 31 (Whole No. 2).

9. Davidson, Helen H. and Lang, G. Children's perceptions of their teachers' feelings toward them related to self-perception, school achievement and behavior. J. exp. Educ., 1960, 29, 107-118.

10. Clark, K. B. Dark Ghetto. New York: Harper and Row, 1965. Gottlieb, D. Teaching and students: the views of Negro and teachers. In Webster, S. W. (Ed.), The Disadvantaged Learner. San Francisco: Chandler, 1966.

11. Justman, J. Ability grouping--what good is it? The Urban Review, Feb. 1967, Vol. 2, No. 1, 2-3.